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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: MCNS DISCUSSES BAGHDAD SECURITY, MILITIAS,
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN, POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE, FORMATION
OF COUNTERTERRORISM BRIGADE

REF: A. BAGHDAD 1196
[B](#). BAGHDAD 1169
[C](#). BAGHDAD 1141
[D](#). BAGHDAD 1055

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ZALMAY KHALILZAD FOR REASONS 1.4 (A), (B), (D)
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[1](#). (S//REL GBR AUS) SUMMARY: The Ministerial Committee for National Security (MCNS) convened the evening of April 13 at the residence of Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Ja'afari. The Commanding General of Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B) gave a briefing on Operation Scales of Justice, highlighting the successes to date, the ongoing nature of the operation, and the assistance he needs from the GOI in order to make the operation successful. The Minister of Interior complained that his forces are constrained by MND-B, but he was assured that this is not the case. Other issues discussed at the meeting were:

-- The PM reported that he had received the initial report from a joint U.S.-Iraqi committee formed to investigate the incident at the Husayniyah on March 26 (reftel D). However, he noted that some questions remain and that the committee has been given an additional week to complete its report.

-- The MCNS discussed the PM's five-point plan to deal with armed groups in Baghdad. The MCNS agreed that, in order to explain the intent of the PM's plan, DPM Chalabi will contact the political leadership of the Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) militia and DPM Abd Mutlaq al-Jiburi will contact Sunni political leaders with armed group connections.

-- The MCNS approved the Emergency Response Plan discussed at the last meeting (April 9).

-- The MCNS agreed that each major political party would appoint a single point of contact to share intelligence information with the National Joint Intelligence Analysis Center (NJIAC). The purpose is to allow the political parties to assist in the defense of Iraq.

-- The idea of forming an Iraqi counterterrorism or quick reaction brigade under the direct control of the PM was discussed. The MCNS agreed that this concept will be studied and that different options will be presented to the PM and MCNS for consideration.

END SUMMARY.

[2](#). (S//REL GBR AUS) Members of the MCNS present were PM Ja'afari, MinInterior Bayan Jabr, MinDef Saadoun al-Dulime, Minister of State for National Security Affairs Karim

al-Anzi, National Security Advisor (NSA) Dr. Mowaffak al-Rubaie, Ambassador, British Ambassador Patey, and MNF-I Commanding General Casey. Others present included MNF-I Deputy Commanding General Fry, MND-B Baghdad Commanding General Thurman, the PM's Chief of Staff Dr. al-Tamimi, and Senior Military Advisor BG al-Kanini. DPM Chalabi showed up briefly and then left during the course of the meeting.

OPERATION SCALES OF JUSTICE UPDATE

13. (S//REL GBR AUS) Responding to concerns expressed by some Iraqi members at the two previous MCNS meetings regarding the scope and timing of Operation Scales of Justice (reftels A and B), CG Casey invited MND-B CG to make a presentation on the Operation. MG Thurman briefed on the purpose of the operation, the steps taken to implement it, successes achieved, and the challenges it still faces. According to MG Thurman, the number of patrols and checkpoints in the Baghdad area has been increased significantly and has led to increased public confidence, which in turn has led to an increased number of actionable tips. As a result, MG Thurman reported, significant arms caches have been discovered, terrorist cells have been smashed, plots to place bombs in Sadr City and elsewhere have been foiled, and a number of terrorists have been killed or captured. MG Thurman explained that simultaneous operations around Baghdad's perimeter also have disrupted terrorist activities. The vastly improved cooperation among Iraqi Army units, Iraqi National Police Forces, and the regular Iraqi Police Services officers will continue to pay dividends in the future, Thurman predicted.

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14. (S//REL GBR AUS) MG Thurman concluded by noting that Operation Scales of Justice needs several things from the GOI in order to succeed:

-- There are too many weapons on the streets of Baghdad. The government needs to develop a policy on armed groups and weapons, as Iraqi commanders do not know how to confront such groups and are not sure about the scope of their authority to do so.

-- There is a shortage of police officers in Baghdad. The GOI must live up to its commitment made at the beginning of the operation to staff district police stations throughout the city adequately.

-- Iraqi government officials and military officers must be allowed to use the media to publicize the successes being achieved by the ISF, which will help give Iraqis more confidence in their security forces' performance.

-- Because of the increased operational tempos brought about by the operation, fuel supplies, spare parts, and maintenance requirements are not being met. The Iraqi Government must give the ISF the resources it needs to fight.

-- A ten percent leave policy must be implemented for the ISF in order to maximize the number of troops available for patrols.

15. (S//REL GBR AUS) CG Casey seconded these points and emphasized that he wants the PM to realize that the operation must be sustained over a long period of time. This is the reason, Casey explained, that the provision of fuel and logistics and the successful use of the media are so important to its long-term success. With regard to the need for fuel, DPM Chalabi (who is responsible for overseeing energy policy) was summoned to the meeting. After hearing from MinInt and MinDef about their need for special gas stations to be dedicated solely to serving security forces, Chalabi said he would direct the Minister of Oil to make two

such stations available.

¶6. (S//REL GBR AUS) The PM said he now has a correct understanding of the operation and its successes. When Ja'afari invited comments from others, MinDef Dulime agreed that he is much more confident after hearing the briefing but that the operation should have started in Abu Ghraib, from which he believes many of the terrorist cells plaguing the Baghdad area operate. MG Thurman responded that operations aimed at Abu Ghraib will begin soon but that what the area needs most is more police. MinInt Jabr protested that the area is too dangerous for his forces and that it must be cleaned out first before the police can go in.

¶7. (S//REL GB AUS) MinInt Jabr also complained that more of his forces are being killed because they have been placed in the streets in greater numbers to support this operation. The terrorists, Jabr explained, are killing his men from long range with sophisticated weapons, adding that MNF-I prevents his forces from pursuing those responsible because they lack sufficient intelligence. MG Thurman challenged Jabr's allegation by explaining that the rules of engagement permit the ISF to pursue and fight if they are engaged; he added that Coalition Forces (CF) will be there to support them. Thurman further explained that the MOI is free to run its own operations but that it must do three things first: coordinate battlespace with MNF-I and other units to prevent friendly fire; present a concept of operations so the CF knows what MOI forces are doing and can support them if needed; and obtain search or arrest warrants in observance of rule of law considerations. Thurman also volunteered that he is available twenty-four hours a day to respond to requests from ISF for assistance in pursuing attackers or mounting operations.

INVESTIGATION OF HUSAYNIYAH INCIDENT

¶8. (S//REL GBR AUS) Following the controversial Iraqi Special Operations Forces raid on a husayniyah in the Ur neighborhood of Baghdad on March 26 (reftel D), the PM ordered the formation of a joint U.S.-Iraqi investigating committee to determine what happened. Ja'afari reported that he and CG Casey had received a preliminary report from the committee earlier in the day but that some questions still remain. Accordingly, the committee was granted an additional

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week to complete its investigation.

MILITIA ENGAGEMENT PLAN

¶9. (S//REL GBR AUS) Turning to the PM's five-point plan for dealing with armed groups in Baghdad (reftel C), Ja'afari explained that the members and political leaders of such groups need to be absorbed into jobs and the security forces, as well as into the political process. Only then, Ja'afari predicted, could the GOI implement the law of no militias and no weapons. Rubaie said that outreach to the political leadership of armed groups is in progress but that the PM still needs to designate representatives to approach the leaders of JAM and the Sunni armed groups in order to explain the plan's intent. The PM said that he would have DPM Chalabi contact the political leadership of JAM, while DPM Abd Mutlaq al-Jiburi would contact the leaders of Sunni groups.

¶10. (S//REL GBR AUS) MinDef Dulime stated that he has a serious problem with bringing former militia members or their political leadership into the armed forces at the ranks of brigadier and above. Ja'afari responded that he understands Dulime's concern that high-ranking members of the military should be qualified by training and background for such

positions, adding that he thinks the political leadership of the militias and parties understand this as well. Nevertheless, Ja'afari recommended, instead of prohibiting such appointments outright, it would be sufficient to strictly limit the number of such appointments.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN APPROVED

¶11. (S//REL GBR AUS) The MCNS approved the emergency response plan that Rubaie had presented at the previous meeting. The plan's purpose is to have a standard operating procedure for the government in the event of a security crisis or national disaster that requires the rapid mobilization of emergency response forces.

INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION WITH POLITICAL PARTIES

¶12. (S//REL GBR AUS) NSA Rubaie revealed that meetings have taken place with leaders of several political parties regarding the sharing of intelligence. In the normal course of their operations, Rubaie explained, these parties learn much about what is happening around Iraq, and they are eager to contribute to maintaining the country's security. According to Rubaie, President Talabani first raised the idea of opening lines of communications between the government and the parties two days earlier during a meeting with the PM and the Speaker of the Assembly. MinInt, MinDef, the PM, and Rubaie subsequently discussed the idea, and Rubaie was tasked to examine it further and discuss it with the National Intelligence Council (NIC). The MCNS agreed that each party participating in this program would designate a single point of contact to deal directly with the National Joint Intelligence Analysis Center (NJIAC). There will be a one-way flow of intelligence from the parties to the government, and it will be considered according to the source.

IRAQI COUNTERTERRORISM BRIGADE

¶13. (S//REL GBR AUS) Possibly following up on a suggestion made by Minister of State for National Security Affairs al-Anzi at the previous meeting (reftel A), Rubaie raised the question of whether a new Iraqi counterterrorism brigade under the direct control of the PM should be formed. The name of such a brigade was not decided, but the idea is to create a force that could be mobilized rapidly to respond to emergencies. Because this force normally would not be committed to ongoing missions elsewhere, it would have the flexibility to deploy quickly as needed. The PM revealed that he had discussed this concept with the President and Speaker of the Assembly, who had agreed that it is a good idea. CG Casey commented that he always has believed that Iraq needs a national counterterrorism capability but cautioned that such a unit would be a complex organization requiring intelligence and other support assets. Casey

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suggested that MNF-I staff work with their Iraqi counterparts to develop some options for later presentation to the PM and MCNS.
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